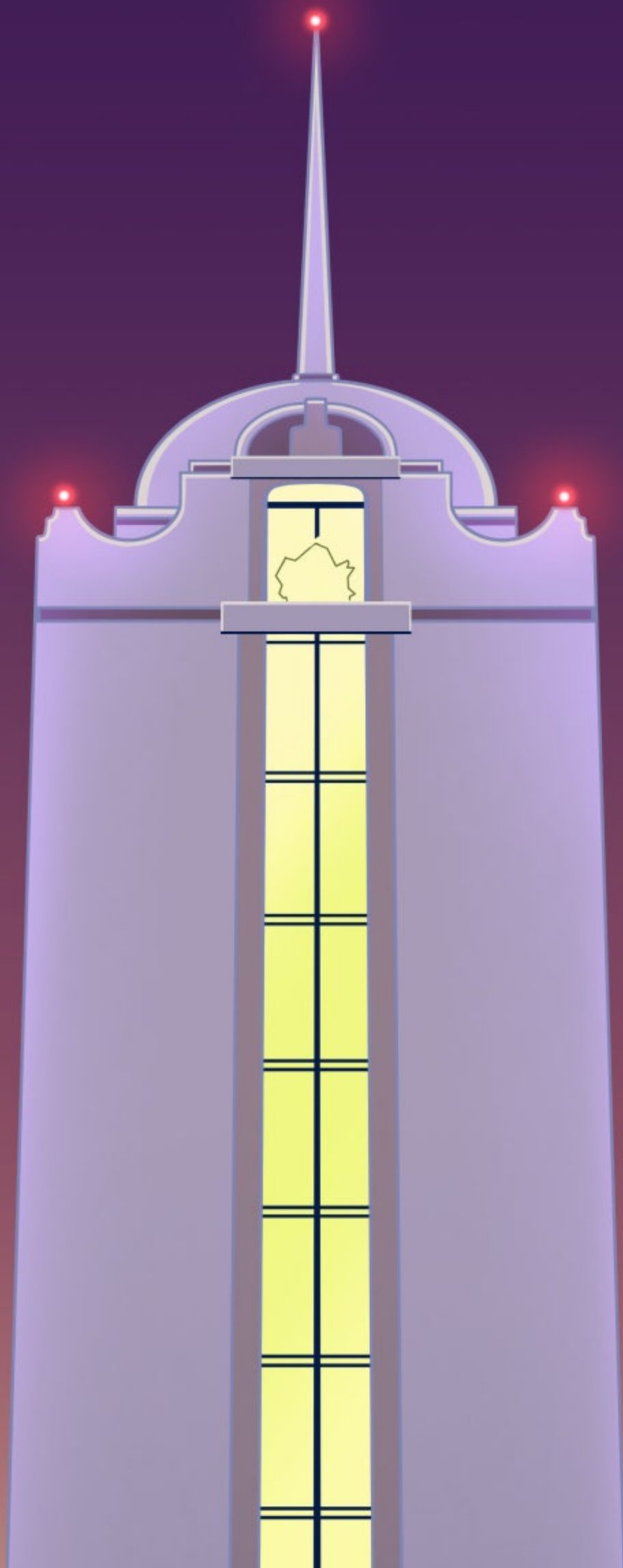
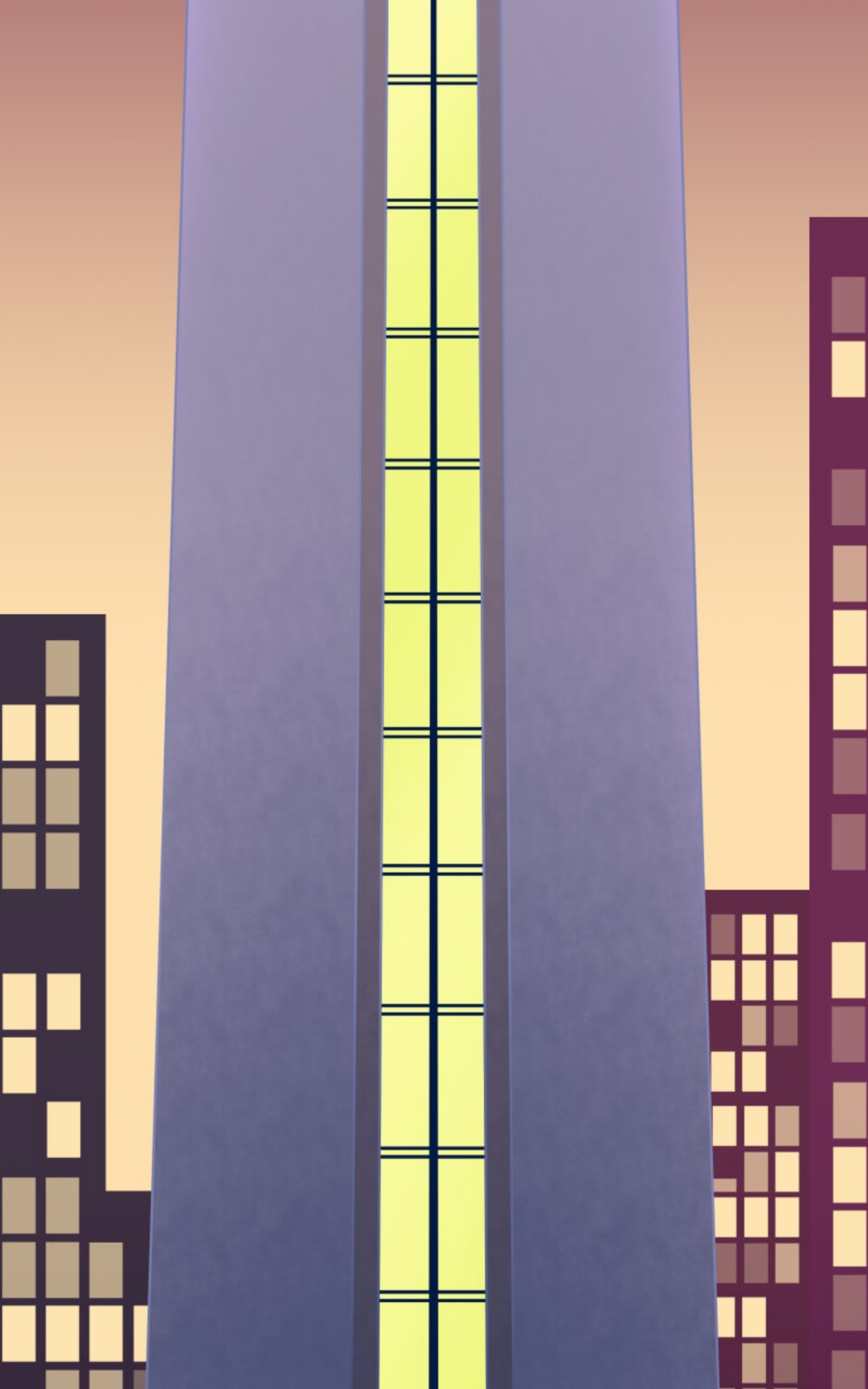
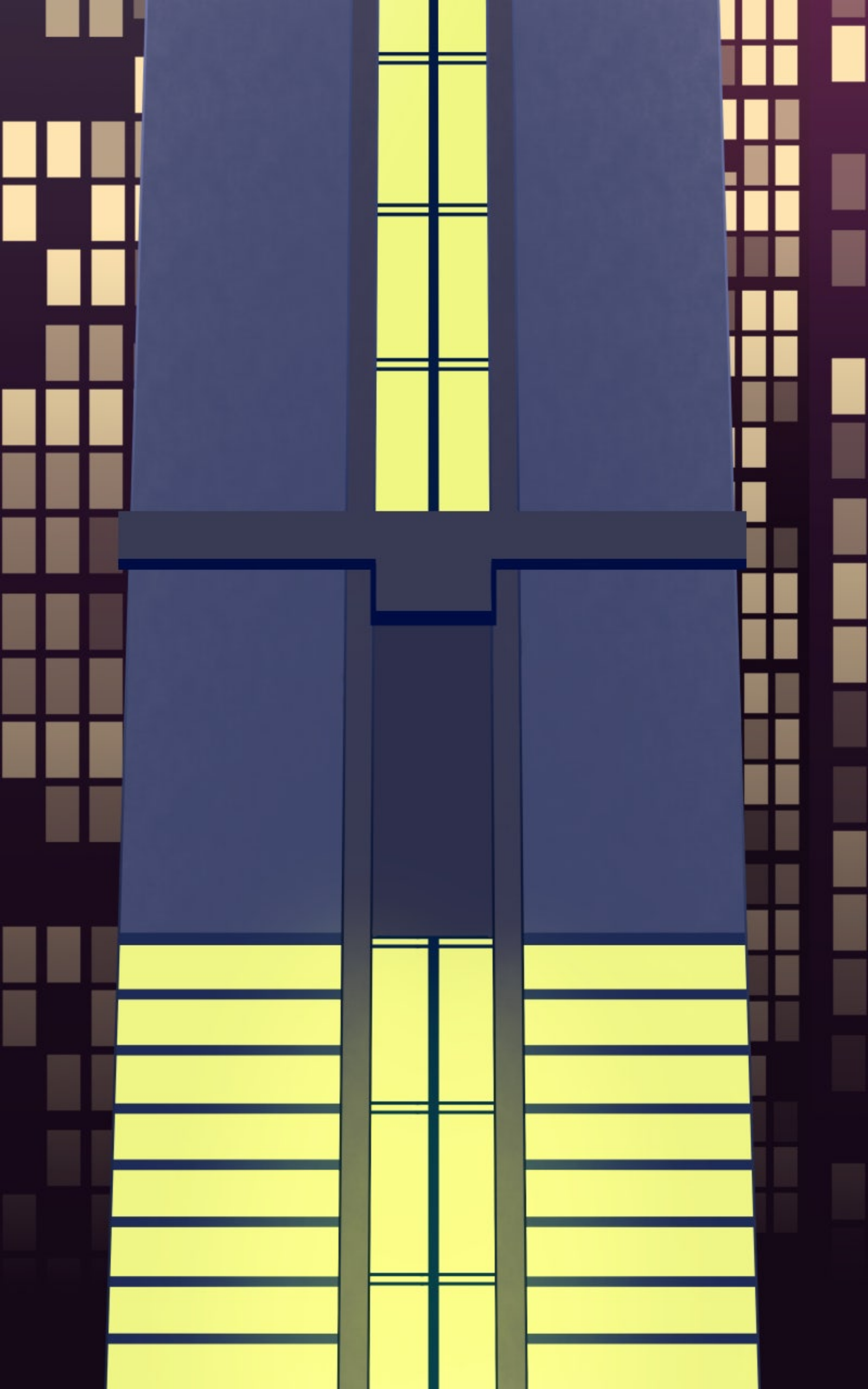












GET THOSE
WEAPONS
LOADED!

I WANT ALL
THE SECURITY
FOOTAGE WE
GOT!

NOBODY IN

OR OUT UNLESS
THEY'RE OKAYED BY
MR. MEDICI!







WHAT'S
HAPPENING? YOU
BARELY SAID A WORD ON
THE RIDE BACK. IS
LORENZO ALL RIGHT?

WE HAVEN'T THE
TIME TO DISCUSS IT.
WE'RE NEEDED
UPSTAIRS.



THIS IS ALL SO
CONFUSING, I DON'T
UNDERSTAND WHAT'S
GOING ON!

THERE'S A
SURPRISE.

CRAM IT

CRAM IT,
YOU-!





A comic panel featuring two characters in a minefield. On the left, a character with teal hair and a white skull mask with two long, thin horns. On the right, a character in a purple hooded cloak with a white feather and a red diamond-shaped ornament. A large speech bubble from the character on the right contains the text. The background shows a dark minefield with a grid of light-colored squares.

LADIES, WE'RE ABOUT
TO WALK INTO A MINEFIELD.
I SUGGEST YOU KEEP THE BICKERING
TO YOURSELVES FROM HERE ON OUT
IF YOU VALUE YOUR SKINS.



WHERE'S MY
FATHER? I WANT TO
SEE HIM.





LORENZO!
LORENZO, ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT? SPEAK
TO ME.

VITALE, THAT YOU?
LIKE THE NEW DESK? HAD
IT HAULED UP AFTER THE
SKULLGIRL WASTED THE
OLD ONE.



YOU REMEMBER
THAT DESK, DON'T YOU?
WAS IN OUR FAMILY FOR
GENERATIONS. SOLID
CHERRY WOOD, NOT A
SCRATCH ON IT.

NOW IT'S



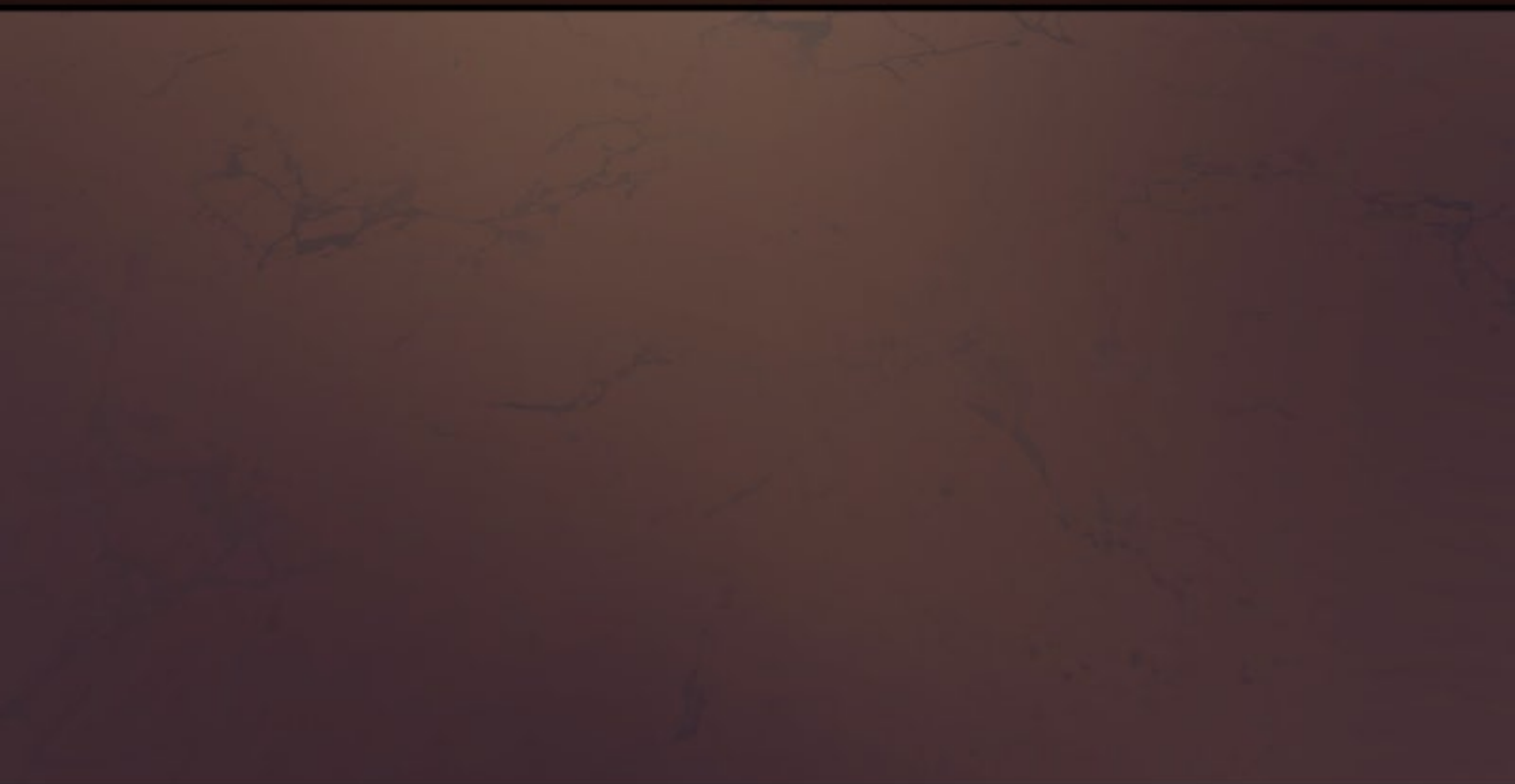
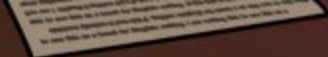
BEEN REDUCED TO
KINDLING.

AND HEY,
GUESS I CAN
RELATE.



WHAT'S THE
MATTER? DON'T LIKE
WHAT YOU SEE?



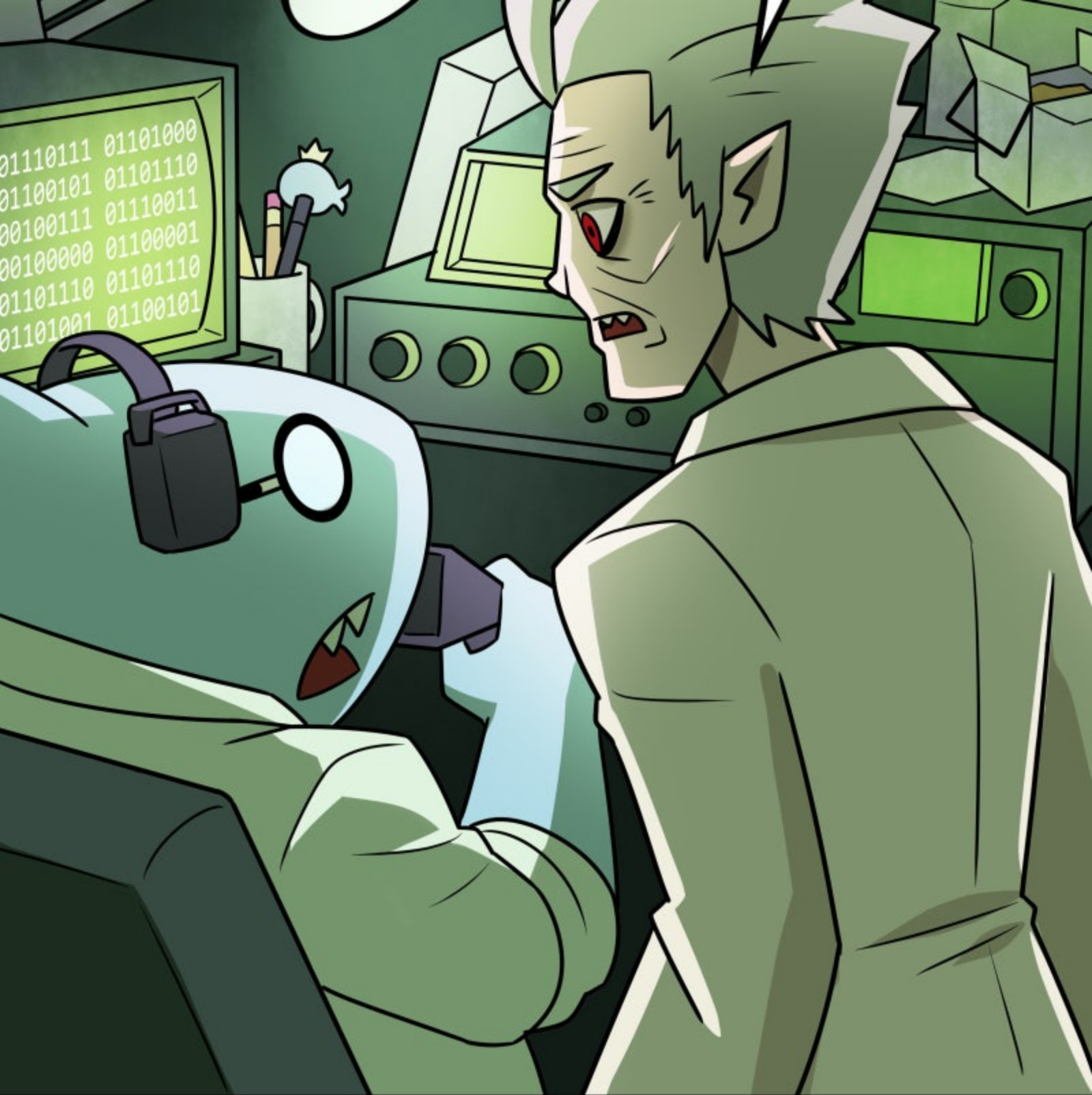


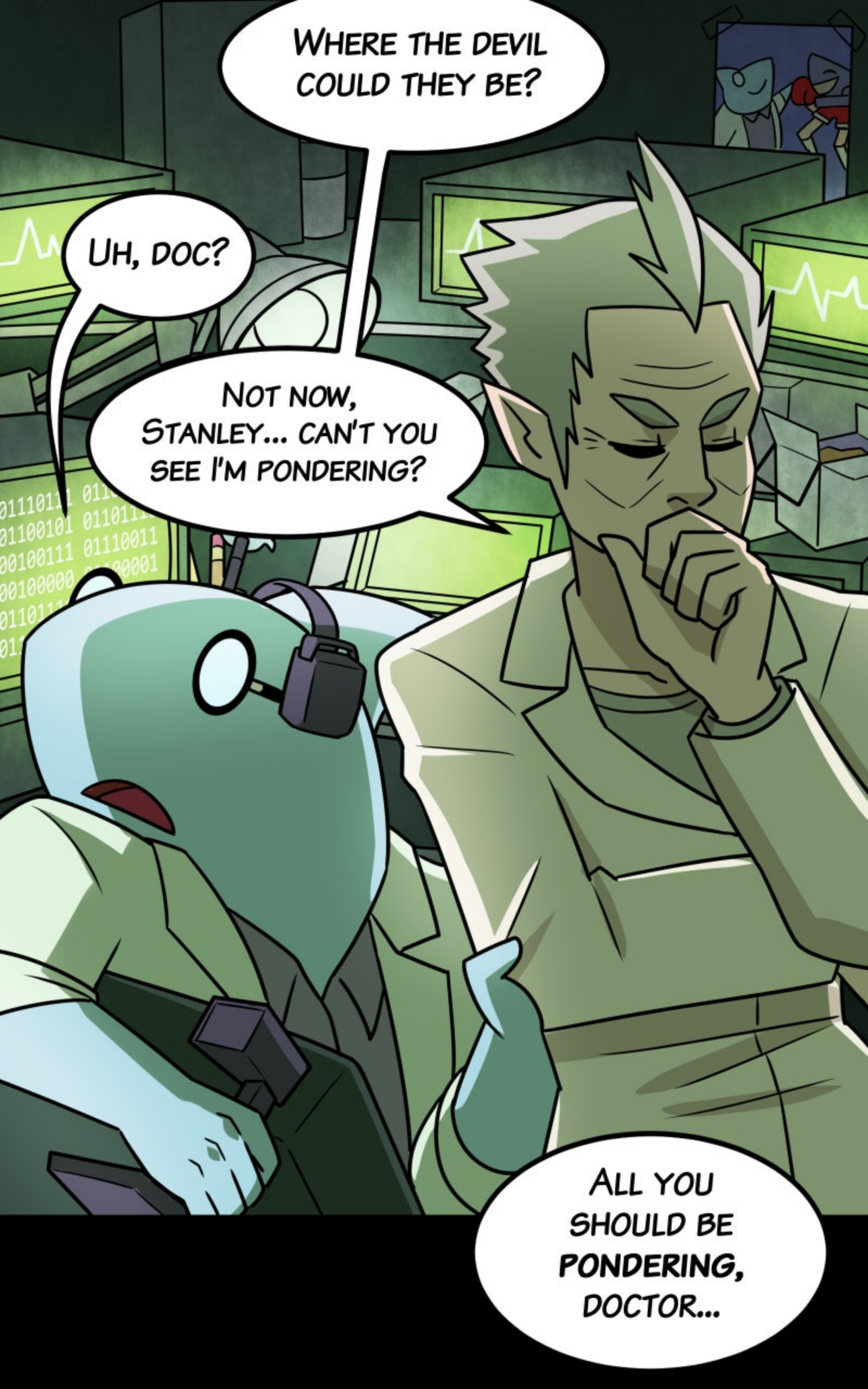




I'M NOT SEEING
ANYTHING, DR. AVIAN.
THERE'S STILL NO
RESPONSE.

THEN TRY AGAIN,
STANLEY. IT'S OF PARAMOUNT
IMPORTANCE WE REACH EITHER
BIG BAND OR PEACOCK AND
DETERMINE THEIR STATUS.





WHERE THE DEVIL
COULD THEY BE?

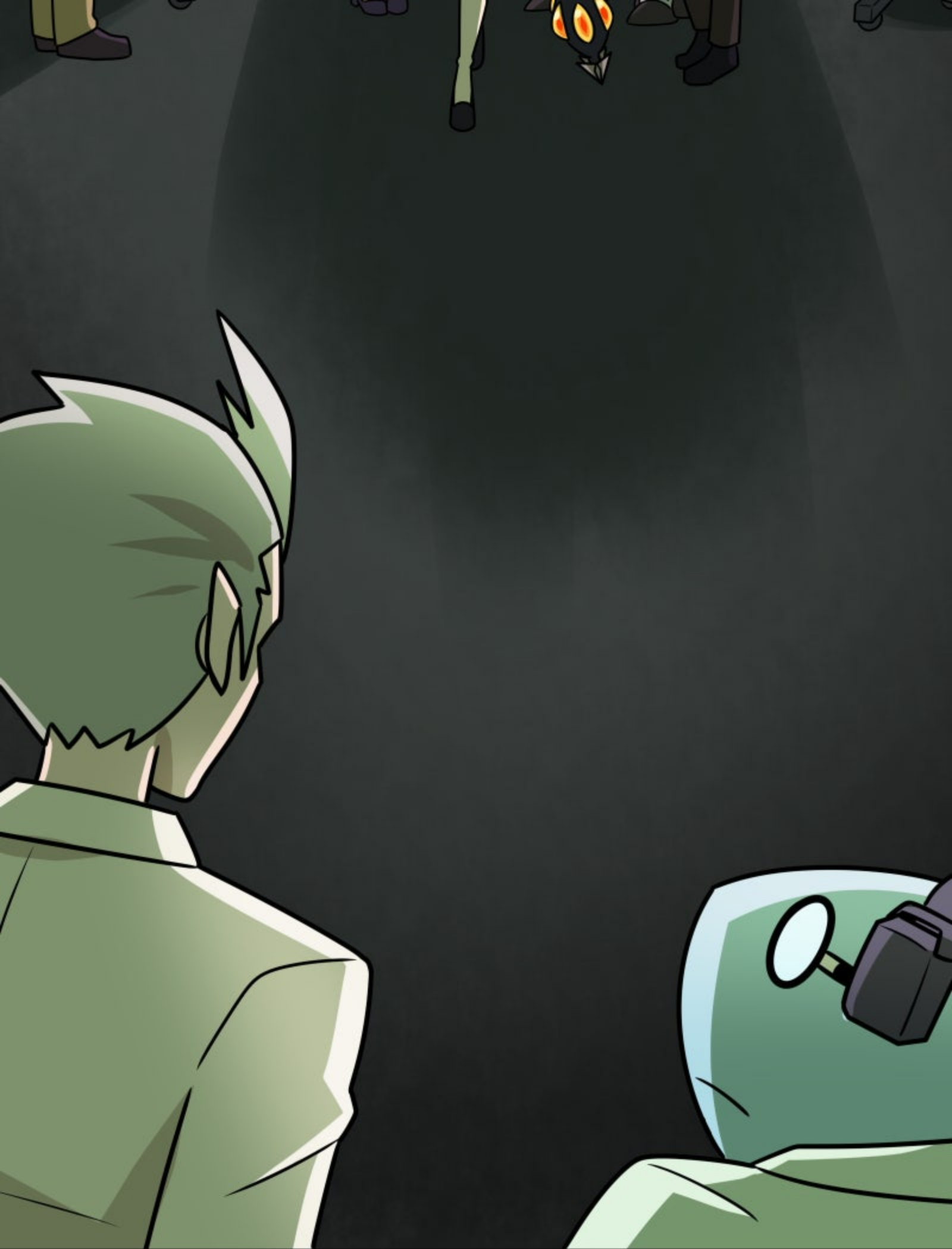
UH, DOC?

NOT NOW,
STANLEY... CAN'T YOU
SEE I'M PONDERING?

ALL YOU
SHOULD BE
PONDERING,
DOCTOR...

IS HOW YOU'RE
GOING TO MAKE UP
FOR ALL THE DAMAGE
YOU'VE DONE.





WHAT IS THE
MEANING OF THIS?!
THIS IS A STERILE LAB,
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE!



MY APOLOGIES
FOR THE INCONVENIENCE,
BUT I COULD ASK YOU
THE SAME QUESTION.
UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN,
THIS IS ALL SUPPOSED TO
BE SHUT DOWN, BY
ORDER OF THE KING.



I CANNOT DENY THAT
SEVEN YEARS AGO WE MAY HAVE...
DISREGARDED YOUR FATHER'S ORDER
TO SHUTTER LAB 8. BUT OUR WORK
WAS, AND REMAINS, TOO VITAL TO
ABANDON. THE SKULLGIRL MUST BE
STOPPED ONCE AND FOR ALL.



HOW? BY
MUTILATING A LITTLE GIRL,
TURNING HER INTO A MONSTER
JUST AS DANGEROUS AND
IMBALANCED?!





YOU'VE CROSSED
PATHS WITH PEACOCK, I SEE. I DO
ACKNOWLEDGE SHE CAN BE A
HANDFUL, BUT I'D HARDLY CLASSIFY
HER USING SUCH EXTREMES. IN POINT
OF FACT, I BELIEVE HER TO BE OUR
GREATEST HOPE.





IF YOU'LL ALLOW
ME, I CAN PROVIDE
UNEQUIVOCAL PROOF THAT
OUR MISSION IS ONE OF
ALTRUISM AND SUCCOR.
COME THIS WAY...





AND I'LL SHOW YOU
WHAT WE'RE REALLY
DOING HERE.

SKULLGIRL COUNTERMEASURES



CAUTION





WHAT CAN
LEG JUMPS

I DO? I WANT
TO HELP!

IT'S PAST NOON,
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE
SOME LUNCH BROUGHT
UP, MY DEAR.

JUST MAKE SURE
IT'S **SOFT** FOOD.





BUT I CAN DO MORE
THAN THAT! LET ME FIND THE
ONES THAT TOOK THE LIFE
GEM. I'LL GET IT BACK AND
MAKE THEM PAY!



THAT'S FAR BEYOND
YOUR CAPABILITIES. BESIDES,
I'VE ALREADY HIRED AN
OUTSIDE CONTRACTOR. SHE
SHOULD BE ARRIVING ANY
MINUTE.



WHAT? WHO?
WHO COULD YOU
POSSIBLY TRUST
WITH THIS MORE
THAN ME?





IT ISN'T A
MATTER OF
TRUST, DARLING.



IT'S ABOUT
GETTING THE JOB
DONE.



YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
SHE'S... SHE'S A LOUNGE
SINGER! WE'RE NOT THROWING

A COCKTAIL PARTY, WE'RE
GOING TO WAR!



WHO'RE YOU
CALLING LITTLE?
YOU'RE NOT EVEN IN
MY WEIGHT CLASS.

THAT INSULT IS
AS TIRED AS YOUR
ACT, LITTLE CIRCUS
FREAK.



ENOUGH. THIS
ARGUMENT IS TIRESOME,
AND I'M NOT IN THE MOOD.
I'M DISPATCHING YOU BOTH
TO RETRIEVE THE ITEM, AND
NEITHER OF YOU HAD BETTER
RETURN WITHOUT IT.





I'M NOT A
BABYSITTER,
VITALE.



NO ONE IS SAYING
YOU'RE A CHILD, CEREBELLA,
BUT YOU MUST WORK ON
CONTROLLING YOUR TEMPER. I
TRUST THIS CAN BE A LEARNING
EXPERIENCE FOR YOU

EXPERIENCE FOR YOU.





AND YOU'RE
WHATEVER I PAY
YOU TO BE. SO GET
TO IT.





IT'S YOUR MONEY.
IF YOU WANT TO ADD TO
MY JOB DESCRIPTION,
AND MY FEE, I'M NOT
GOING TO STOP YOU.





BUT YOUR GIRL
HAD BETTER BE
ABLE TO KEEP UP.

KEEPING UP
AIN'T GONNA BE A
PROBLEM SINCE
I'LL BE LEADING

THE WAY!





A comic panel with a dark background. In the foreground, a man with a balding head and a purple shirt is coughing into his right elbow. He has a green tie. In the background, a man in a brown double-breasted jacket, glasses, and a tie stands with his hands on his hips, looking on. A speech bubble from the man in the background says "I NEED SOME SLEEP." Large red sound effects "HACK" and "COUGH" are written over the coughing man's action.

I NEED SOME SLEEP.

HACK

COUGH









YOUR HIGHNESS,
WE'VE BEEN AT THIS ALL DAY.
YOU'VE CATALOGUED OUR ENTIRE
STOCKPILE OF ANTI-SKULLGIRL
WEAPONRY, INTERVIEWED OUR
STAFF AND REVIEWED OUR
RECORDS. HOW MANY TIMES
MUST WE GO OVER THIS?





AS MANY TIMES
AS IT TAKES UNTIL
I'M SATISFIED.

I DON'T THINK
ANYTHING SHORT OF
DISMANTLING US
PIECE BY PIECE WILL
SATISFY YOU!





I COULD
CERTAINLY HAVE
REINFORCEMENTS
SENT TO ARRANGE
JUST THAT!

AND BY THE
TIME YOU RETURNED WITH
THEM I ASSURE YOU ALL TRACE
OF THIS LABORATORY WOULD
BE GONE. I HIGHLY DOUBT
YOU'D FIND US AS EASY TO
LOCATE A SECOND TIME!

DOCTOR...
YOUR HIGHNESS,
PLEASE!





IT'S FRIGHTFULLY LATE,
AND I IMAGINE WE COULD ALL USE
SOME REST. WHAT SAY WE RETIRE
FOR THE NIGHT AND RECONVENE
IN THE MORNING? WE HAVE
AMPLE SPACE TO ACCOMMODATE
YOU AND YOUR TEAM.





SLEEP REPLENISH
STRENGTH, YES?

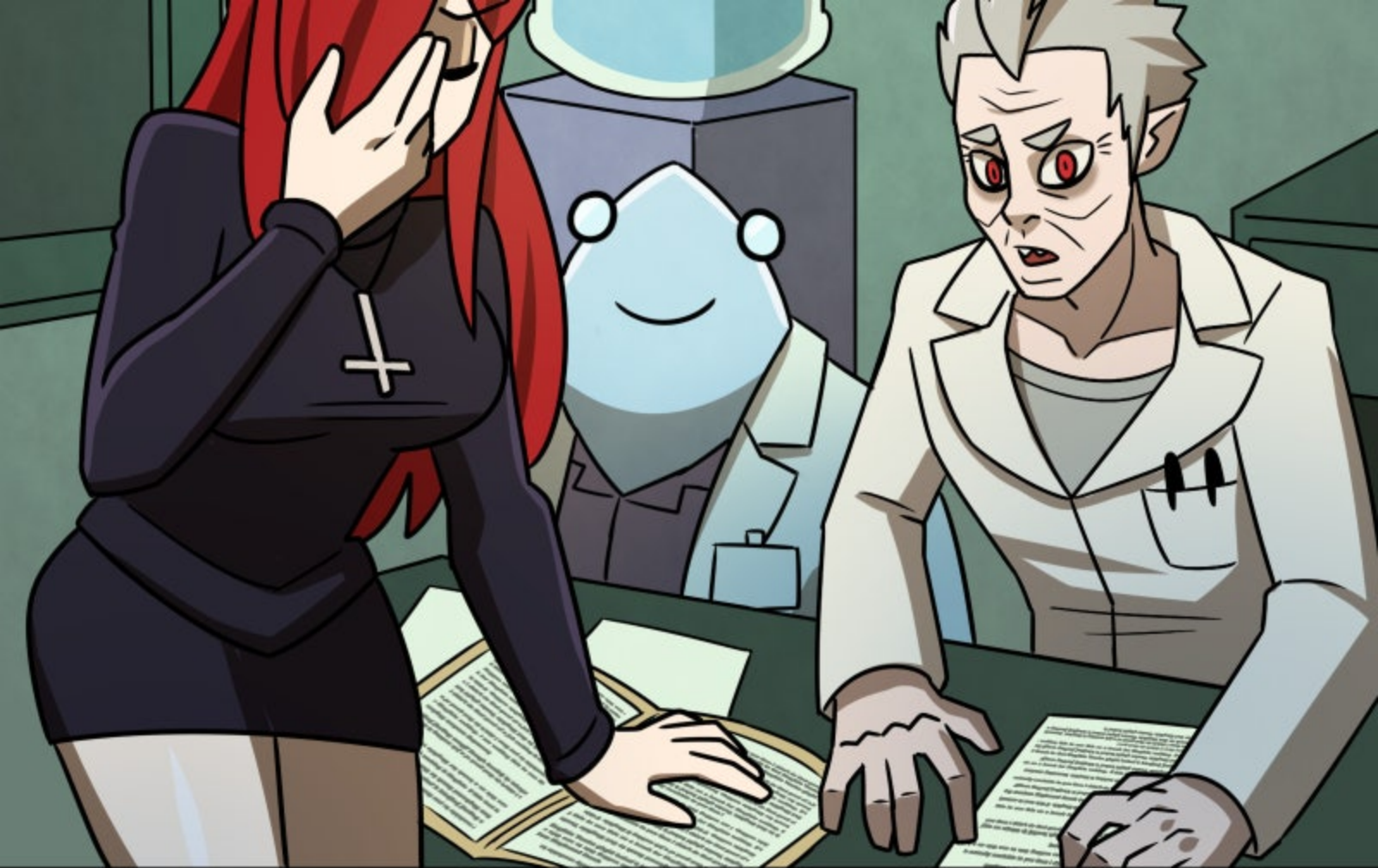
THE HEALTHY &
SAFETY SECTION IN THE
EGRET BASIC TRAINING
MANUAL DOES STATE A
PROPER EIGHT HOURS SLEEP
IS IDEAL FOR OPTIMAL
PERFORMANCE.



I'M INCLINED
TO CONCUR... IF YOUR
HIGHNESS FINDS IT
AGREEABLE.

FINE. SO LONG
AS WE PICK UP WHERE
WE LEFT OFF IN THE
MORNING.





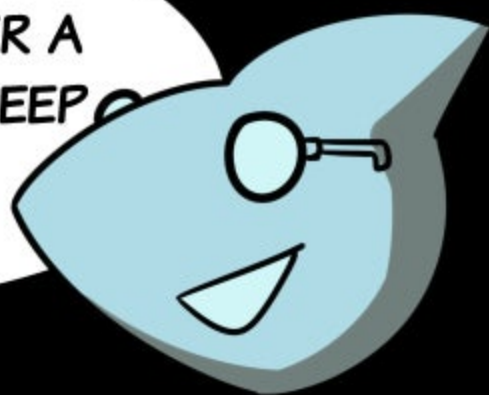
THEN IT'S SETTLED!
I'LL MAKE ALL THE
ARRANGEMENTS.

SKULLGIRL COUNTERMEASURE





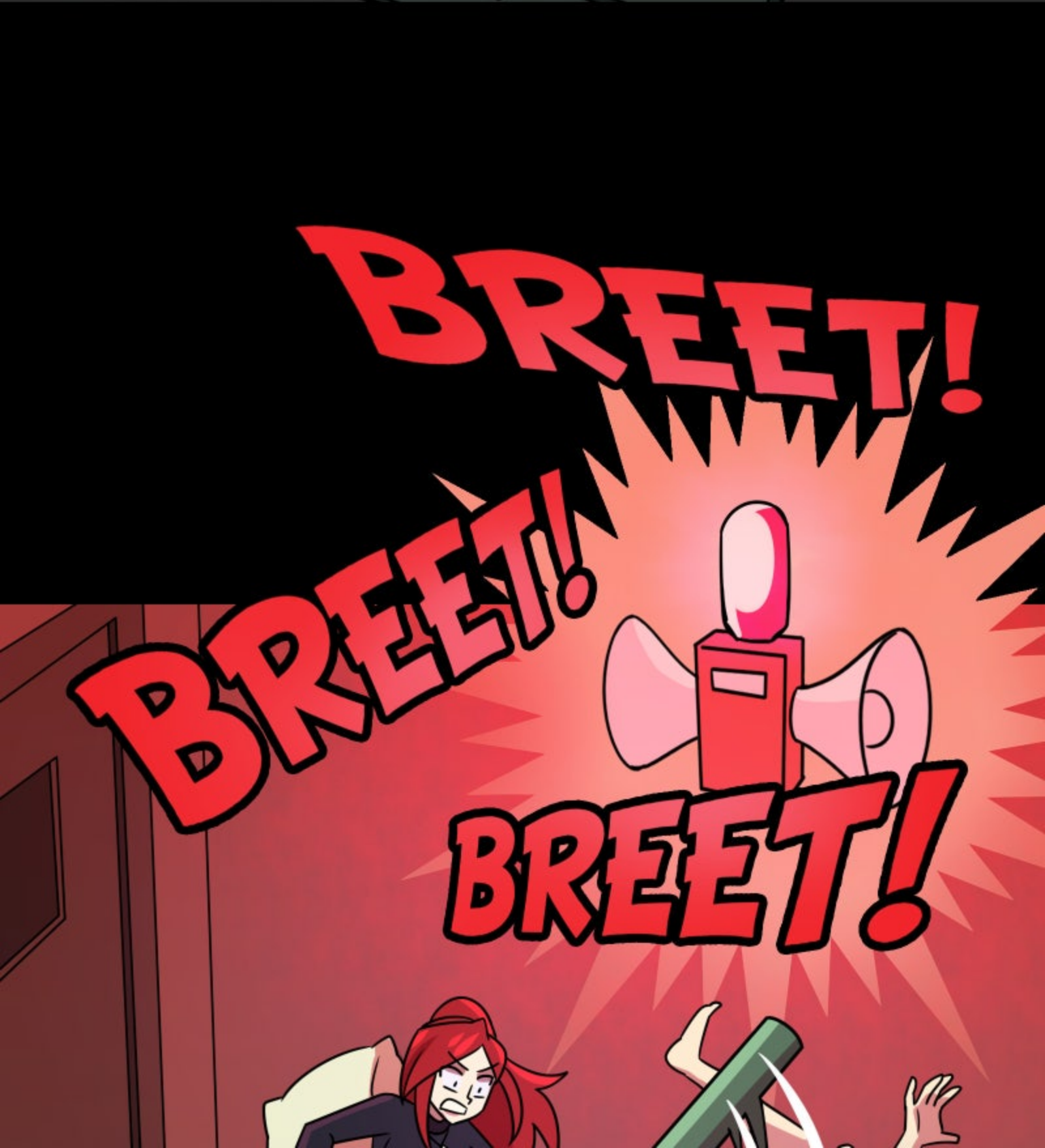
YOU'LL SEE, AFTER A
GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP
I'M CERTAIN...





**EVERYTHING WILL
GO SWIMMINGLY.**







BREFT!

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

NOTHING
GOOD! C'MON!



BREE-

ALERT

ALERT
DISABLED,
DOCTOR.

THANK YOU,
STANLEY, I CAN
HEAR MYSELF
THINK AGAIN.

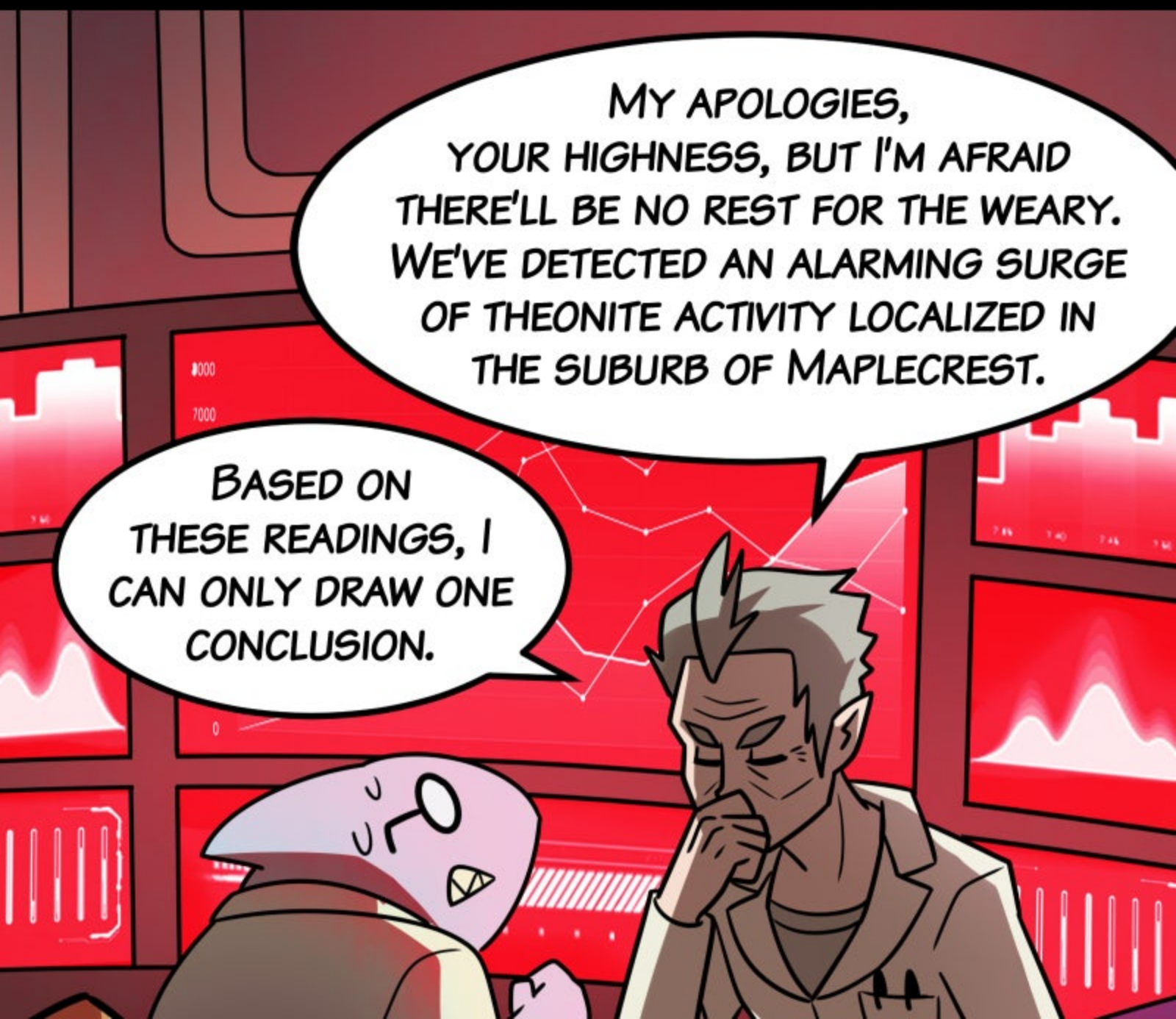
AVIAN! WHAT
IS THE MEANING
OF THIS?





MY APOLOGIES,
YOUR HIGHNESS, BUT I'M AFRAID
THERE'LL BE NO REST FOR THE WEARY.
WE'VE DETECTED AN ALARMING SURGE
OF THEONITE ACTIVITY LOCALIZED IN
THE SUBURB OF MAPLECREST.

BASED ON
THESE READINGS, I
CAN ONLY DRAW ONE
CONCLUSION.









✎ CREDITS ✎



CHRIS FLORES

INKS & PENNELS



SUZI BLAKE

STORYBOARDS &

ARTIST RENDERERS
@ARTIST_BLACK

COLORING ASSISTANCE
@SUZIE_DODDLES



LORE EDITOR

JESSE BUSCH
PEN STROKE PONY

ART DIRECTOR

SEAN KEETON
@SEANKEETONART

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SKULLGIRLS RETURNS
APRIL 14